

Washington State Patrol Media Release

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Date: October 30, 2002
For: Immediate Release
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Washington State Patrol Equipment and Standards Section, Bi-weekly Law Review.

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“Traction Devices”

The use of studded tires may only be used between November 1st and April 1st unless otherwise directed by the Department of Transportation due to inclement weather.

When traffic control signs stating “chains required” are posted by the Department of Transportation (DOT), it is unlawful for a vehicle under 10,000 pounds gross vehicle weight to enter the area without having mounted on your drive tires the traction device specified by the sign.

What if I have an all wheel drive vehicle? There is an exception for all wheel drive vehicles when all wheels are in gear and equipped with approved traction tires. Approved traction tires have a minimum of 4/32 inch tread; a relatively aggressive tread pattern; on at least one side of the tread design the shoulder lugs protrude at least 1/2 inch in a direction generally perpendicular to the direction of travel; and tires meeting these specifications shall be permanently labeled on at least one sidewall with the words “mud and snow” or any contraction using the letters “M” and “S”. A set of tire chains for at least one set of drive tires must be carried in the vehicle.

Vehicles which are not all wheel drive may use other approved traction devices which include tire chains and studs.

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